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reader will find in this pamphlet description of conditions which might be duplicated in almost any city of the same size, and with similar industrial opportunities, in the United States. Each of the communities considered is typical of its kind and each presents social problems which are the result of its industrial development and its history.

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Grants in Aid: A Criticism and a Proposal. By SIDNEY WEBB. (London, New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1911. Pp. 129. 5s.)

The text fills 110 pages; a bibliography fills 19; the latter is chiefly of information bearing on grants for particular purposes, as finance and governments. This book seems to be, says Mr. Webb, the first one to appear as a treatise on grants in aid. The first sentence is that "The Grant in Aid," a device peculiar to English administration, has hitherto failed to receive the consideration that its practical importance deserves," and soon follows (page 3) the interesting statement that "if we seek to estimate the real as distinguished from the nominal constitution of the United Kingdom of the present day . . . we may come to the unexpected conclusion that the Grant in Aid, mere financial adjustment though it seems to be, is more and more becoming the pivot on which the machine really works." Mr. Webb's argument is plain. From the civil war of the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century, nearly all public administration was in local hands, and the central government left them alone: there was "an anarchy of local autonomy." Then, without theory and almost unnoticed, there grew up a way of securing national supervision and control, required in the interest of the community as a whole, without offending local autonomy and without losing the value of local initiative. By grants in aid, from the national exchequer, to one local governing body after another, for particular purposes, the national government bought rights of great import, for the general welfare. In 1830, the total annual payments of such nature, mostly odds and ends of historical survivals, were probably less than a hundred thousand pounds; now, the total for the United Kingdom is probably near thirty millions; and vast increases are likely.

The objects as usually given for these grants may be grouped as: for equitable mitigation of inequalities in financial burdens; to secure necessary supervision and control by the national government; to encourage the kinds of expenditures most desirable in the interest of the community as a whole. The chief object, of course, to social reformers is the possibility of thus securing a "national minimum" in the elements of civilization upon which the whole community should insist. For example, the Home Office has been able, through grants and supervision, to secure everywhere a national minimum of county constabulary: it has not been able to secure such in the field of child protection and nature, under abundant laws, because there is no provision for a central authority to supervise, with effectiveness, the local authorities. Public opinion is working in the way of national regulation through grants in the following services: public health, provision for the ill in mind and body, and all-round education of the child.

Student workers in the United States may well consider the thesis of this little book; for they must more and more face that vital problem of democracy—how to get local communities to use special knowledge in civics and social matters. We shall probably use more state coöperation and money with local authorities in matters of education and health. Mr. Webb well pleads for a truly educational use of such coöperation. England has so far failed too much in getting full returns for the large investment in grants. But the expression of the government's buying the right to regulate is not a helpful one. Logically carried out, the government could not regulate private agencies, as of education or charity, without the use of public money. We prefer the theory of a reasonable responsibility of the state for all its creatures, corporations public or private, without question of public money.

JEFFREY R. BRACKETT.

Année Sociale Internationale, 1912. Troisième Année. (Reims: Action Populaire. 1912. Pp. 768, 209. 9 fr.)

Much interesting information on current social questions is conveniently accessible in this volume. Its point of view, that of the Roman church, leads to but brief and unfavorable treatment of such a topic as socialism. Part I, dealing with the family, discusses vital statistics, housing, hygiene, moral and social problems